

SPECIAL MEETING OF WESTFIELD POLICE COMMISSION

WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

January 19, 2022

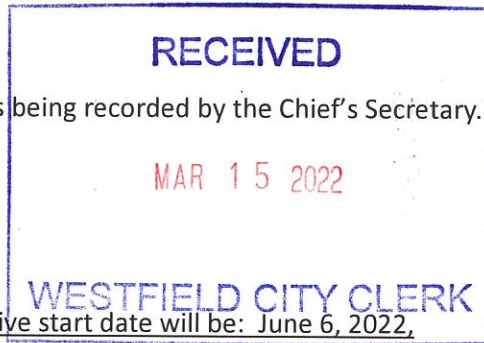
The Westfield Police Commission meeting was called to order at 59 Court Street, Westfield, MA, at 5:30 pm.

Roll Call: Leonard Osowski – Absent
Felix Otero – Present
Richard Sypek – Present

Commissioner Sypek notified everyone present that tonight's meeting is being recorded by the Chief's Secretary.

New Business:

- A.) Interview and appoint three (3) full-time police officers – Tentative start date will be: June 6, 2022, provided all conditions of employment are met:



Jeremy Santos: Commissioner Otero asked Jeremy to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Jeremy said he graduated in 2012 from Springfield Central High School. He took some time off after high school. He joined the Army on February 28, 2013. From there, he joined the National Guard. He has mostly done manufacturing and factor work. He loves to draw. He loves watching hockey games. Family is very important to him. He is currently employed at Savage Arms. He has been employed there for about a year and a half. His responsibilities as a lead include making sure his guys work flow is running smoothly and offering any assistance they made need. He trains new employees for his department as well. His goal has always been to get into law enforcement and be more involved with the community. He's originally from Springfield, but he found Westfield to be a much nicer community and for that reason, he moved to Westfield. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Jeremy what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Jeremy said he always tries his best to do the right thing when no one is looking. He said his parents have always made sure that he is aware that every action he takes can have a consequence. He always tries to be mindful and respectful of others. Commissioner Sypek noted that Jeremy already interviewed with the police department's interview committee earlier this month. He asked Jeremy if there was anything that was not disclosed during that interview that he would like to notify the commission of. Jeremy said there was not.

Chris Maldonado: Commissioner Otero asked Chris to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Chris said he was very interested in joining the Army. He had to train himself to be ready. He trained for a year or 2 before joining. He spent 7 years in active duty. He was deployed to Afghanistan. He was honorably discharged. He has since moved back to Westfield where he has worked for the USPS. He is a mail handler in the Springfield, MA location. His hobbies include recreational outdoor activities such as snowboarding, hiking, camping, going to beaches and traveling. He would love to become a police officer. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Chris what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Chris said he has a passion for helping others. He said he is reliable and disciplined.

Nicholas Chaoush: Commissioner Otero asked Nicholas to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Nicholas said he played Jr. hockey for several years. He played in New Hampshire and in Springfield, MA. He then went to school Miami Florida for computer science. He then

relocated to WSU to play hockey and continue his education in computer science. He still has some credits to complete which he is going to complete. He currently works at Stop It Goaltending a few hours a week. He also does computer cleaning and upgrading and car detailing on the side on his own. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Nicholas what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Nicholas said that he conducts himself with respect, honesty and integrity. He said he has empathy and has the ability to put himself in other people's shoes to see where they are coming from. Commissioner Sypek noted that Nicholas already interviewed with the police department's interview committee earlier this month. He asked Nicholas if there was anything that was not disclosed during that interview that he would like to notify the commission of. Nicholas said there was not.

Hunter Leveille: Commissioner Otero asked Hunter to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Hunter said he attended Massachusetts Maritime Academy majoring in emergency management with a minor in homeland security. He played football during that time and was also a part of the weight lifting team. He joined the National Guard during his junior year in college. He is currently on orders with the National Guard for the covid mission. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Hunter what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Hunter said he prides himself on community service. He volunteers with Habitat for Humanity. It is a passion for him. He loves construction work and helping those in need. Commissioner Sypek noted that Hunter already interviewed with the police department's interview committee earlier this month. He asked Hunter if there was anything that was not disclosed during that interview that he would like to notify the commission of. Hunter said there was not.

Alexis Bradley: Commissioner Otero asked Alexis to tell the commission about her background, starting after her high school graduation. Alexis said that she attended WSU. She graduated in June of 2021 with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Minor in Sociology. After that, she was appointed as an advisor to the cadet program with the Westfield Police Department. She is currently employed as a teller at Berkshire Bank. She enjoys going to the gym and working out. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Alexis what it is about herself that would help to maintain that reputation. Alexis said she has a willingness and a desire to help people. She learned this through her involvement in the cadet program. She was with this program for 7 years. They were always volunteering at community events. It felt really good to give back.

Scott Gregory: Commissioner Otero asked Scott to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Scott said he graduated in 2006. He grew up in Blandford, but went to school in Lee, MA. He dad was a state trooper stationed in Lee. He went to the University of Dartmouth for engineering. After his second semester, he decided he didn't want to sit behind a desk for the rest of his life and he switched his major and his school and graduated with an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice. He was given the opportunity to attend the full time police academy before he received his Bachelor's Degree. He was self-sponsored. He graduated 4th in his class of 50. In February of 2011, he started working for the Northampton Police Department. He has learned a lot as a patrolman. He is a field training officer. He holds several instructor certifications. He is a lead instructor for defensive tactics. He is a course away from being a firearms instructor. He is also the department's liaison for the river task force for the marine unit. He is also in charge of the department's armory including the administrative and maintenance of all firearms. In the past 3 or 4 years, he decided he wanted to pursue his education so he went back to school part time to WSU. He just graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Minor in Policy and Ethics. Commissioner Otero asked Scott why he wants to leave the Northampton Police Department. Scott said he had to really think about what he wanted to do. He said he plans on starting a family soon as he is recently married. He moved to Westfield specifically because he wanted to be on the Westfield Police Department and because this is where he wanted to start his family. Northampton was the first department to pick him up. He wants to have a stable career where he can be valued as a patrolman and a team member. He wants to build his life here, plant roots here and eventually retire from this department.

Ryan Keating: Commissioner Otero asked Ryan to tell the commissioner about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Ryan said he graduated in 2013. He then went to UConn. He started studying political science. He enjoyed it. He then began working in security at 6 flags. He has worked there for approximately 6 years. He started at the ground level and is now a senior supervisor. He is responsible for overseeing the shifts of 50-70 officers. He works hand in hand with the Agawam Police Department. He is heavily involved with the recruiting and training process. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Ryan what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Ryan said he is very interested in community policing. He thinks community policing is a good way to build the trust within the community. He said he also has experience through his current employer of recruiting younger individuals. He is interested in working with youths and would love to work with the cadet program.

Chief Valliere said that he was very impressed with all of the candidates this evening. He said the department is in a unique position. Right now, the department needs people in the full time academy. There are limited seats available. He thinks Scott Gregory has the experience and did an amazing job. He also really liked hearing the interviews of Ryan Keating and Alexis Bradley. It is the recommendation of the Chief that the commission appoint Hunter Leveille and Alexis Bradley. He said that he hates to pass up Scott Gregory, but the seats in the academy are limited and he doesn't want to miss an opening in the academy by appointing an officer who has already been to the academy.

Captain Pitoniak said he had the opportunity to interview all of the candidates here tonight. He said they all gave great interviews. He said the most important thing right now is the 3 spots the department has in the academy. He needs to get 3 candidates in the academy. He said the commission can hire the 2 men who have already attended the academy at a later date. He said his recommendation tonight is for Chris Maldonado, Alexis Bradley and Hunter Leveille.

Captain Dickinson said that he also had the opportunity to interview all of the candidates here tonight. Based on the civil service rating and based on the rating from the interview team at the police department and the fact that the department needs to send 3 officers to the academy, he recommends Chris Maldonado, Hunter Leveille and Alexis Bradley.

Commissioner Otero said he has to rely on the recommendations of the Chief and Captains. He said he reviewed the resumes and the scores. He agrees with both Captain Pitoniak and Captain Dickinson.

Commissioner Sypek thanked both the Captains for such thorough reports. They provided the commission with a lot of information. He said the commission can view both the civil service ranking and the ranking from the interviews that were given by the department's interview team. He said that while the commission would like to be able to hire all of the candidates, they can only hire 3 tonight. He pointed out that more hiring will be coming up in the near future. He said his decision tonight is based on the need to put 3 officers into the academy.

Commissioner Sypek made a motion to appoint Hunter Leveille, Alexis Bradley and Chris Maldonado as Full-Time Police Officers for the Westfield Police Department.

Richard Sypek – Yes – Felix Otero - Yes

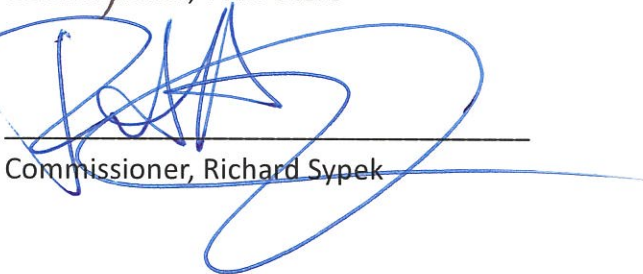
Announcement of Next Regular Meeting: The next meeting of the Westfield Police Commission will be held on Monday February 14, 2022.

Motion to Adjourn: At 6:12 pm Commissioner Sypek made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

Richard Sypek – Yes – Felix Otero - Yes



Commissioner, Felix Otero



Commissioner, Richard Sypek

APPROVED FOR RELEASE ON

2/14/22